

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-5 (Canceled).

6. (Previously presented) A method for treating or preventing damage to bone, cartilage, connective tissues, skin, mucous membranes, epithelium or teeth, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
  - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
  - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and
  - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

7. (Previously presented) A method for improving wound healing and tissue regeneration, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein

said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence

selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
  - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
  - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and
  - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

8. (Previously presented) An antibody or antibody fragment which binds to a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
- (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
- (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and
- (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2.

9. (Previously presented) An antibody or antibody fragment which binds to a protein comprising the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO:2 or biologically functional parts thereof.

10. (New) A method for treating or preventing damage to connective tissues, skin, mucous membranes, or epithelium or for use in connection with dental implants, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
  - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
  - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2 or biologically functional parts thereof,
  - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2, and
  - (e) a nucleotide sequence which encodes an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:13,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

11. (New) The method according to claim 10, further comprising administering a matrix, carrier, diluent and/or filler along with said protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family.

12. (New) A method for inhibiting or reducing osteoporosis or arthrosis, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
  - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
  - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2 or biologically functional parts thereof, and
  - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2, and
  - (e) a nucleotide sequence which encodes an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:13,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

13. (New) The method according to claim 12, further comprising administering a matrix, carrier, diluent and/or filler along with said protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family.

14. (New) A method for inducing angiogenesis, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
  - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
  - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2 or biologically functional parts thereof, and
  - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2, and
  - (e) a nucleotide sequence which encodes an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:13,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

15. (New) The method according to claim 14, further comprising administering a matrix, carrier, diluent and/or filler along with said protein of the TGF- $\beta$  family.